



WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
HEADQUARTERS

801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

No. 28.

A MIGHTY DEMONSTRATION

Great Host of Workers March Through the Streets of Philadelphia and Significantly Protest Against the Kidnapping of the McNamara Brothers.

Washington, Oct. 14.—With a shout, the echo of which will ring over distant Los Angeles the people of Philadelphia have voiced their protest against the un-American act of kidnapping the McNamara Brothers, ten thousand men and women, of that class that represents the bond and muscle and intellect of the Republic paced with steady tread the streets of the "City of Brotherly Love" and 15,000 citizens acclaimed every utterance of the champions of organized labor who declaimed for liberty and the preservation of the traditions of our land. It happened on the evening of Tuesday, October 10, and the following excerpt from the Public Ledger of Philadelphia tells the story:

"Fifteen thousand workers — members of all the various unions in the city — filled and surrounded the Labor Lyceum, in sixth street, last night and gave to Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor; Frank Morrison, Secretary of that organization and Frank Ryan, President of the International Iron Workers' Union, a wild ovation.

"The occasion was one that stirred every good union man's heart to speech and song. The demonstration was one of protest — protest against any adverse decision that the Los Angeles courts might make against the McNamara brothers, John J. and James B. — who are to be placed on trial today charged with complicity in the dynamiting of the plant of the Los Angeles Times. Gompers, Morrison and Ryan, the latter an intimate associate of the defendants, who belonged to the union which he heads, stirred the 3,000 persons crushed inside the big brick edifice to a very rage of enthusiasm.

"When the venerable head of the federation rose to speak the cheering lasted for five minutes and could be heard distinctly two squares away. Morrison's address was punctuated with roars of approval and snatches of the French battle hymn — the Marseillaise — taken up by the throng in the hall and roared by the responsive crowd in the street.

"It was by all means the greatest demonstration that labor has ever made here. A great parade, in which at least: 10,000 men and women young and old— marched, preceded the meeting. That parade was one at which to wonder. And certainly the spirit that prevailed within its ranks was one with which to reckon."

THAT "PHILANTHROPIC" STEEL TRUST

Women Slave Ten Hours a Day in Wire Mill at Heart-Breaking, Soul-Killing Back-Bending Toil.

Washington, Oct. 14.—American traditions are being shattered and American customs obliterated by the trusts. In the state made famous by the Minute Men and glorified by the struggle on Bunker Hill women are being slaughtered to provide dividends for the corporations. Following the dreadful revelations in the works of the Blake-Knowles Pump Company at East Cambridge, Mass. comes another exposure in Worcester, Mass. revealing the horrible fact that frail women are employed in the wire mill of the Billinn Dollar Steel Trust and are compelled to perform tasks that would shorten the lives of strong men. This is what the Boston American has to say about it:

"Women lift as much as 5,200 pounds of wire daily at the wire making branch at the plant of the Billinn Dollar Steel Trust at Worcester.

"The women work at this killing labor for ten hours a day.

"They have to stand all the time.

"The atmosphere in which they toil is heavy with dust. This dust is part dirt, part metal particles. It imperils the health of the women through contact with the delicate tissues of the body.

"Outside of this peril the work is dangerous in itself. The 'snapping' or 'back-coiling' of wire in the spooling and drawing rooms causes loss of fingers, or even of an arm or leg at times.

"Clergymen, physicians and others condemn this terrible employment of women in the Worcester Wire Works. The women say: 'It is fearful. But one must live.'

"Here is a brief quotation from one woman's own description of her work. 'This is what I do. I work in the spool room where the wire is wound from a can to a spool. These spools weigh ten pounds each. I average 260 spools a day. I have to lift these spools twice each and carry them from one end of the room to the other. You can figure out how much lifting I have to do.'

"Worcester is the second city in Massachusetts. It boasts itself as the 'Heart of the Commonwealth.' Its manufactured goods go to all parts of the world.

"The biggest manufacturing plant in Worcester is that of the American Steel and Wire Company. This is one of the subsidiary corporations of the United States Steel Corporation.

"In the North Works are women, widows and mothers, many of them, who spend ten hours a day in heart breaking, soul killing, back-bending toil. They toil and toil without hope. They labor while they last. Then go to their miserable homes to rest. Sometimes they return to the wire works to take up the burden of life again. Sometimes they do not return. Others fill their places."

Worcester is one of the cities that the exponents of the "open shop" claim as their own. They have boasted that they have killed off the forces of organized labor, and introduced a class of "free and independent workmen". The steel trust is also an exponent of the "open shop" and employs only free and independent workmen. The above terrible indictment, not from organized labor but from an independent source shows conclusively the necessity for the organization of the workers if they would preserve American traditions and the spirit of American justice.

Trades unionism still lives in Worcester and it will yet purge the city, and save the workers from thralldom.

THE McNAMARA TRIAL

Court Proceedings Which Began on October 11 Will Involve Hundreds of People and Cost Millions of Dollars.

Washington, Oct. 14.—All eyes are now turned to Los Angeles where one of the greatest trials of the century is going on. The National Manufacturers' Association and its auxiliaries are attempting to fasten a crime on organized labor and will spend millions of dollars to accomplish that end. Organized labor, strong in its sense of innocence, is giving battle to the organized employers and their attorneys say they will present a defense so strong that its enemies will be confounded.

The following facts and figures give an approximate idea of the magnitude of the McNamara trial:

Number of witnesses to be called by the prosecution, 425.

Number of witnesses who will probably be called for the defense 135.

Number of lawyers who will appear in the court room for the defense and prosecution, 10.

Number of lawyers associated with the defense and the prosecution who will not appear in the court room, 40.

Number of detectives employed, 600.

Length of time estimated for the first trial, 180 days.

Estimated number of words which will be contained in official transcript of the case, 7,200,000.

Approximate expense to the defense and the prosecution, \$2,000,000.

Number of States where witnesses will be secured, 15.

Number of correspondents who will report the trial, 64.

Number of spectators who may secure daily entrance to the courtroom, 74.

INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL ESTABLISHED

London, Eng., Oct. 14.—For the settling of industrial disputes the government has established an industrial council, consisting of leading representatives of employers and the working men, under the chairmanship of Sir George Ranken Askwith, of the board of trade.

According to the original plan of Sydney Buxton, president of the board of trade, the council was to be composed of ten leading employers and ten prominent labor representatives.

THOSE SPREADING RAILS

Washington, Oct. 14.—The railroads continue to cripple and maim the people; cars continue to jump the tracks and again the same reason is given, "spreading rails." Two trainmen were seriously injured and several hundred passengers badly shaken up when train No. 9 running toward New York over the Lackawanna Railroad was derailed near Delaware Water Gap. Spreading rails caused the accident. If railroad companies employed a sufficient number of maintenance of way employees, paid them living wages and established a schedule of working hours that would give them sufficient time to rest and recuperate there would be few accidents on account of spreading rails. The maintenance of way employees on the Lackawanna Railroad were compelled to strike recently on account of intolerable conditions of labor, and now the traveling public is suffering as a result.

POSTAL STRIKE THREATENED

Postal Workers in Britain Discontented With System in Operation and May Stop Work.

Washington, Oct. 14.—Reynolds's Newspaper is authority for the following statement: "It would paralyze the whole trade of the country if there occurred a general strike of postal workers, and as there is so much discontent with the system in vogue, the ramifications of which are very extensive, the men may one of these days take the matter into their own hands and stop work. One can easily imagine what the effect would be. To discuss in this column the numerous grievances of the postal employes would be impossible, but the leaders of the Postmen's Federation are doing their best to prove to the Postmaster-General the difficulties which the employes have to contend with. But up to the present the leaders have only met with rebuff. There is very grave and serious discontent, and something will have to be done to rectify matters. The Postmaster-General has been asked to appoint a select committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the grievances and claims of the employes, but so far nothing has been done. Arrangements are being made to hold a series of meetings in London to acquaint the public with the facts of the case. The casual labor system, which affects over 70,000 men and women is one of the serious grievances. At a meeting held during the week at Manchester, there was for the first time in the history of the postal service a gathering of inspectors as well as telegraphists, postmen, and sub-postmasters. They, one and all, agreed that there was sweating in the postal service, and that the treatment meted out to them was causing unrest and discontent. Wages in the postal service have practically been at a standstill for the past twenty years, despite the increased cost of living, whilst the work of the postal employes has greatly increased. It was decided to again call on the Postmaster-General to appoint a committee to inquiry.*

BRITISH MINERS FAVOR STRIKE

Washington, Oct. 14.—Unless some arrangements can be made between the colliery proprietors of England and the miners in regard to a minimum wage, there may be a national strike of miners. The trouble has been brewing for many months, especially in regard to the rate of pay for working in abnormal places. A large number of miners have had sectional strikes over the question of work and wages, and now the Lancashire and Cheshire miners are up in arms regarding a demand for an increase in wages for the day wagemen and the boys employed in the pits. The coal owners have agreed to meet the men's representatives, and if no settlement is reached, 100,000 miners will strike. The miners in many districts are also demanding the abolition of piece work. The coal owners have already expressed their opinion that they are afraid that men working in abnormal places may not work fairly, and may be guilty of malingering, hence their decision not to give way on the question of a minimum wage. It is to be hoped however that some solution of the difficulty will be found, or there is bound to be a national strike of miners in the near future.

STEEL WORKERS WIN

Washington, Oct. 14.—The strike at the Dowlais, Eng. steel works has ended in a victory for the men. The employers have agreed to recognize all the unions and do business with their representatives.

A GOOD LABOR TALK

Governor Chester A. Aldrich of Nebraska Eulogizes Organized Labor. Says

It Makes for the World a Higher Standard of Civilization.

Washington, Oct. 14.—Under the caption: "Discriminating Approval of Trade Unionism" the Western Railway News publishes the following from Governor Aldrich of Nebraska: "The cardinal principles upon which the American Federation of Labor bases its great movement, are in my judgment, fundamentally correct and for the uplift of society as a whole. Secondly, in my judgment the great rank and file of the members of the trade union are honest, conscientious, and law-abiding citizens who bare their breasts in the cause of humanity. Let us first clearly enumerate those principles as a means of determining as to whether their advocates are undesirable citizens or not. They are, then—

"First — The shortening of the hours of labor, in harmony with the increased methods of production, that the workmen may have leisure for recreation, rest, study and the enjoyment of God's sunshine.

"Second— The abolition of child labor in our industrial pursuits and their transfer to the schools and the playgrounds, that their bodies and their minds may develop into noble manhood and womanhood.

"Third — Better sanitary and safety regulations for the protection of health and safety of the workmen in the shops, the factories, mills, and the mines.

"Fourth — The abolition of sweatshops as a means of protecting womanhood.

"Fifth — Better wages, as a fair share of production, as a means of property, providing for the home, of educating the children and a general participation in the duties of citizenship.

"In my humble opinion those principles are based upon the teachings of Christ and make for the world a higher standard of civilization. They are based upon the principles of humanity and their opposition can only be based upon greed, or more profit.

"Labor organizations are the outgrowth of and the legitimate results that come from the highly organized state of that other concomitant force in the industrial world that we call capital. Therefore labor organizations are a necessity. They are potent factors for good, and it is no argument against them that sometimes in the name of a labor union an ill-advised strike is precipitated. Labor leaders, so far as I know, recognize the fact that liberty is obedience to law and that justice is equality to all and special privileges to none."

SOME CORRUPT JUDGES

Washington, Oct. 14.—The late Senator George F. Hoar of Massachusetts did not believe that all judges were incorruptible. While a member of the House of Representatives in 1876 he said: "My own public life has been a very brief and insignificant one, extending very little beyond the duration of a single term of senatorial office. But in that brief period I have seen five judges of a high court of the United States driven from office by threats of impeachment for corruption or maladministration. I have seen in the state of the union foremost in power and wealth four judges of her courts impeached for corruption."

A COMPLETE VICTORY

Bookbinders in New York City Gain Great Concessions and Demonstrate the Power of Unionism.

Washington, Oct. 14.—When the bookbinders of New York City presented demands to their employers, the latter refused to entertain them and made a declaration of their determination to "run their own business." The bookbinders went on strike and in less than a week the employers came to the conclusion that they could not run their own business, and that no business could be done until the employed returned to work.

As a result of this revelation the employers decided to do business with the union. They called for and held a conference with a committee from the labor organization and they are all doing business to-day.

The union gained a complete victory, the employers conceded every demand that they had previously refused to entertain, and the strikers returned to work realizing more than ever the necessity for organization.

As a result of the agreement the wages of the gilders will be increased \$5 a week and the stampers and gold leaf layers will receive an increase of \$2 a week. For the bookbinders a flat minimum rate of \$18 a week has been established an increase in wages from \$2 to \$3 a week. The settlement affects every bookbinder in New York City.

SOCIETY SCORED

Washington, Oct. 14.—In a speech bristling with satire and wit, Father Bernard Vaughan, London's famous Jesuit orator, played grasping capitalists, made a plea for a higher and broader Christianity.

The famous "Mayfair" Jesuit" whose sermons on the sins of society aroused all England last year while speaking to a vast audience in the Twelfth Regiment Armory, New York City held his listeners spell bound as he denounced dishonest and grasping employers. Here are some of his aphorisms:

"Some people work well at their meals, but not between them.

"It is bad economy to starve the poor that the rich may wallow in luxuries.

"Every human being has a right to live as a human being.

"Any employer who does not give a living wage or enforces excessive hours of work or does not provide sanitary surroundings for his employes is a sweater and the sooner he is taken by the scruff of the neck and shown the Hudson River the better.

"Our spiritual vitality is threatened by material luxuries.

"The Christian church to-day needs men to be lifted up to ideals."

EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

Washington, Oct. 14.—Speaking at the Ecumenical Methodist Conference held in Toronto, Can. Charles W. Fairbanks, former Vice-President of the United States had this to say: "The keynote should be more religion in business and more business in religion. Inequality of wages for men and women working under like conditions is an affront to the spirit of Christian religion. The laborer has become merged in the machinery of which he is such an important part, and has come to feel too frequently that the church is not sympathetic toward him."

Stay away from Muscatine, Ia. A general strike of button makers is on.

BLACKLISTED BY BANKS

Bank Clerks Who Testified for the State in the Charles C. Morse Trial
Are Victims of Discrimination.

Washington, Oct. 14.—According to a statement made by States Attorney Wise of New York bank clerks must "shut up tight" or perjure themselves in court when the honesty of their employers is questioned, on pain of being blacklisted.

Speaking at a meeting of the New York Chapter of the American Institution of Banking the States Attorney declared that not one of the clerks who had told the truth in the case of the Government against Charles A. Morse in the National Bank of North America investigation had been able to get a position in New York since.

Continuing his address he said: "When there is crookedness in a bank it generally comes from above and not from below. There are more prosecutions of dishonest bank officers than of thieving clerks. But clerks are thrust into a bad position by their dependence. When called to testify against their bosses they know that if they do not shut up tight they'll be fired and practically blacklisted.

"I say that bankers ought to seek out those discharged clerks, employ them and promote them. Otherwise the bank clerks themselves ought to organize and walk out, union fashion, every man of them, when any clerk is discharged for the truthful evidence given by him in a court of law. It is most unfortunate that banking standards have not yet got so high that a clerk who refuses to commit a crime needs protection against the source of his livelihood by the very instigators of the crime and protection against the prejudices of other bankers."

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INTERESTS

Washington, Oct. 14.—The following letter appeared recently in the New York World: "To the Editor of the World: The duty of the educated leisured classes is to impress upon working classes the vital necessity for the reign of order under the law.— Andrew Carnegie to the Editor of the World.

"That is to say, the educated bondholders, stockholders and officials of the steel trust should teach the ignorant working classes to respect and obey the law.

"The educated classes who control the beef trust, the sugar trust and like law-abiding corporations should teach the ignorant working classes to obey the injunctions of the courts and the statutory enactments of Congress and the state legislatures.

"Certain educated and leisured members of high society should instruct the ignorant of the workday world in morals, the ethics of matrimony and the duty of respecting the divorce decrees of the courts.

"As one of the working classes, I fear however that there will always be economic unrest and perhaps strife as long as there are Carnegies and the particular form of mental strabismus whose distorted view Mr. Carnegie ingeniously confounds with education.—R. L."

At Apalachicola, Florida the ship carpenters have been successful in a campaign for shorter hours and higher wages. Hours were reduced from 10 to 9 and wages were increased from \$3 to \$3.50 a day.

GOOD TIDINGS

Farmers, Progressive Citizens and Organized Labor Combine to Give the State of Washington a Government by the People.

Washington, Oct. 14.—At Seattle, Wash. an important alliance has been formed, which embraces farmers, members of the Direct Legislation League, and representatives of organized labor. The mission of the alliance is set forth in the following document:

"To those who believe in a government by the people, of the state of Washington.

"Greeting: We desire to announce the formation of a Joint Legislative Committee of the Direct Legislation League of Washington, State Federation of Labor, Farmers' Union and State Grange, which organization was perfected at a conference of the executive committees of these organizations and a large delegation of friends of government by the people, held in North Yakima.

"The report of the committee on permanent organization, which was unanimously adopted, was as follows:

"That this organization be made permanent and be known as the Joint Legislative Committee of Direct Legislation League of Washington, State Federation of Labor, Farmers' Union and State Grange.

"Objects: First. To secure the adoption of the Initiative, Referendum and Recall amendments now before the people.

"Second. To secure the submission to the people by the next Legislature of an amendment extending to the people the power to initiate amendments to the constitution.

"Third. To secure at such times and in such manner as may be deemed advisable the enactment of measures that will conserve and extend the power of the people to rule themselves and elect their public servants.

"The officers shall consist of an executive committee of four, one from each organization, to be chosen by their respective organizations and having power to select their own chairman and Secretary-Treasurer.

"The conference adopted resolutions declaring in favor of: The proposed amendments now before the people which are to be voted upon at the November election (1912), which provides for the initiative and referendum of laws and the Recall.

"Favoring Legislation providing for the election of delegates to national conventions to nominate Presidents and Vice-Presidents by the Direct Primary, the Recall of Judges, the election of United States Senators by a direct vote of the people and a thorough Corrupt Practices Act."

TO REDUCE COST OF LIVING

Washington, Oct. 14.—In Indiana union men are going to make an effort to inaugurate a plan that will reduce the cost of living. Typographical Union No. 1 of Indianapolis has taken the lead in the matter and a meeting will be held on October 29, at which representatives of the various unions in the city will be present. At this meeting an effort will be made to arrange for some form of co-operative purchasing that will eliminate the middle man and his exorbitant profits.

THE PASSING OF ELIOT'S HEROES

Strike Breakers Hired by Agents of the Illinois Central Railroad Driven Out by Courts and Citizens.

Washington, Oct. 14.—The day of Eliot's hero is over. He is now regarded as an "undesirable citizen" and citizens of high standing have united with union workers in the demand that he leave certain communities for the community's good.

At East St. Louis, Ill. three of Eliot's "heroes" were arraigned in court and given until sun down to get out of the city. Tattered, hungry and weather-beaten they presented a piteous spectacle, and when they told the court that they had been picked up in a Bowery lodging house in New York, locked in a car on a special train with 166 other "heroes" and given no food on the journey from New York to East St. Louis the court and the spectators realized that the railroad company had little regard for the "heroes" it expected to rout the strikers.

On their arrival in East St. Louis the master mechanic of the local shop had refused to put them to work. Penniless, tired and hungry they had drifted into the streets of the city only to fall a prey to unfeeling policemen who failed to recognize them as heroes, called them "bums" and drove them back to the shop. There they received scant courtesy, were bundled on a special train and started for Chicago. But "heroes", like every day men need something to eat and they dropped off the train and made another effort to satisfy the demands of the stomach. The police grabbed them again, and when they appeared in court even the city authorities seemed loath to provide them with the scant, coarse fare of the criminal, and they were driven from town. Alas and alack for three of Eliot's heroes.

At McComb, Miss. a whole train load of heroes found a very hostile reception from citizens of all degrees. Like heroes of outlaw fame they had guns and on arriving in the Mississippi city they began to use them like outlaws. They pumped lead into the citizens, and said citizens resented the mode of entry of the "heroes". But when the "heroes" added insult to injury by heaping indignities on the women of the community, the united citizenship asserted itself and the "heroes" were compelled to depart, guarded by troops.

At New Orleans, Mayor Behrman, in addressing 5,000 strikers showed conclusively that he too was no admirer of the men that Professor Eliot had tried to immortalize. He assured the men, who were battling for their rights that he would exercise his moral right to compel the railroad company to deport all "undesirables" who may be brought to the city to take the places of the strikers.

The day has passed when traitors to their fellow workers can merit the approbation of the great American public. The day is here when true manhood is appreciated and the rights of the toilers must be respected. Eliot's "heroes" are passing - the true heroes are coming.

RECALL IN CALIFORNIA

Washington, Oct. 14.—By an overwhelming vote the people of California have declared in favor of making the recall of officials who have proven recreant to their trusts a part of the constitution of the State. The recall includes judges of the State Court in its provisions. The initiative and referendum amendment were also carried by a 2 to 1 vote.

AS BAD AS RUSSIA

American Workmen Beaten and Dragged to Mines, Wives Brutally Assaulted Because Husbands Are Union Men.

Washington, Oct. 14.—In New Jersey where the patriots froze, starved, fought and died for liberty, methods as tyrannical, if not more so, than those in operation in Russia, are being used to break the spirit of those who toil. Men have been dragged from their homes and forced, against their will, to labor in the mines. They have been beaten and put in jail; their homes have been desecrated and their wives brutally assaulted and some have been banished because they dared be union men. Workers in the neighborhood are horrified and astounded, and when they meet ask each other this question: "Are we living in the United States or Russia?"

The following statement is from the New York World: "Franklin Furnace, N. J. This mining village of 1,800 persons has within the past fortnight witnessed lawless scenes worthy of the California of '49.

"After the New Jersey Zinc Company had denied the right of its employees to organize a labor union and had discharged a score or more of its men who had enrolled as members an armed mob of vigilantes took upon itself to invade miners' houses, drag them to work or order them out of town.

"Franklin Furnace lies in the picturesque valley of Walkill and is a straggling settlement. Its one industry is that of the New Jersey Zinc Company. The center of things is known as green spot, the main entrance to the mine, near which are situated the company's offices, the company store and homes of the officers in charge. At different widely scattered points of the company's property — and nearly everything in Franklin Furnace belongs to the company — live the miners and other employees."

The New York World is authority for the statement, given by employees that armed men broke into their homes, assaulted them and their wives, dragged them to jail and banished them from the town because they would not give up the union. Father McGuinness, the village priest, said: "Men were told if they did not dress and go to work they would be taken to jail. As a result the local jail contained that day a good complement of men. They are all out now. I don't know where."

Not content with owning the ground, the underground, the stores, etc. this company is determined to own the men, soul and body. The union would have ransomed the men and the women and the babies, but at the point of the gun, setting law at defiance, with thugs and the village authorities an attempt was made to destroy the labor organization and keep the workers in bondage.

On learning of the outrage the American Federation of Labor immediately dispatched Organizer Stuart Reid to defend the rights of the workers. He will be aided by several other organizers.

BUTCHERS GAIN CONCESSIONS

Washington, Oct. 14.—Four hundred members of Butchers' Union No. 174 of New York City have gained a material increase in wages and a substantial reduction in the hours of labor. After a strike had been threatened the employing butchers signed a two years' agreement with the union. The agreement provides for a nine and one-half hour day for the first year and a nine hour day for the second year. Store tenders are granted an increase of \$1 a week and a reduction in the hours of labor.